

Young People's Society

LIFE LESSONS FROM ISAIAH.

Topic for Sunday, May 2: Life Lessons for me from the Book of Isaiah. Isaiah 6: 1-9.

DAILY READINGS.

Monday: The service. Isaiah 42: 1-7.
 Tuesday: The sacrifice of the Servant. Isaiah 53.
 Wednesday: My hope. Isaiah 2: 1-5.
 Thursday: My King and his reign. Isaiah 11: 1-9.
 Friday: My song of salvation. Isaiah 12: 1-6.
 Saturday: My desert place. Isaiah 35: 1-10.

Let us gather from this mine some of the gems which it invites us to make our own.

"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless; plead for the widow."

"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them; and the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and fife, and wine are in their feasts, but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands."

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth."

"Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

"O Lord, thou art my God. I will exalt thee. I will praise thy name." For thou hast done wonderful things; for thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

"We shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

Prayer Meeting

TOPIC—"NOT SERVANTS BUT SONS."

Gal. 4: 1-7.

For the Week Beginning April 25.

An illustration employed in the argument of the preceding chapter is continued in this. It is that of the relation of the heir to an inheritance. The design is to show the higher privileges, the more spiritual life of believers under the dispensation of the Spirit. The child, before reaching maturity, is excluded from the possession of the estate. He is under tutors and governors, subject to their discipline and restraint. He is an heir, though because of childhood, he "differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all." The discussion here regards the church as a unit throughout its progress. It is not a discussion of progress in the experience of the individual Christian. "The church was in bondage under the Mosaic ritual, which was the period of its minority and subjection to tutors and governors."

The coming of Christ marks a new era, in the progress and privileges of the church and therefore of its members. The old external ceremonial, the elaborate temple, the priestly vestments and functions, the numerous sacrifices and festivals appealed to a purely carnal conception and are here called "elements of the world." They were ordained for their purpose, but of themselves were "beggarly elements." They were not suited to matured spiritual conceptions and worship. They had typical significance which was too largely unperceived and neglected. They were preparatory institutions, adapted to elementary religious learning, never designed to be permanent, and were ever subject to perverse and gross misconception.

In the purpose of God this was to pass away. A "fullness of time" was appointed in which redemption should be accomplished. Then God sent forth his Son, one with him in substance, equal in power and glory, "to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons." The Son of God became the Son of Man, also, bringing his humanity into unity with his deity. He was made under the law that he might redeem those who were under the law, for "in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren."

The result is that instead of a yoke of ceremonial obedience and the bondage which it imposed, those who believe have the liberty of the gospel and the adoption of children, the privileges of adult heirs instead of the restraints and subjection of minors.

Inasmuch as this is the rightful estate of believers, whether Jewish or Gentile, "God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." The effect of his coming is to impart such power of perception and appreciation, as enables the believer to know the relation that he sustains and to rejoice in it. The spirit of "his Son" is given therefore "his Son" is revealed to the soul, entering into vital union with that soul. He fosters the filial spirit of love and confidence, which prompts to the delightful realization that the relation is not that of a servant, "but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." The heir, delighting in this relationship, is emboldened to worship God as his Father, to walk in blessed communion with him and to rejoice in hope of the endless felicity of his presence. Then, so knowing God as to reverence, love, trust and obey him, what have we to do any more with idols? Why return to beggarly elements of human superstition and invention, as though desiring to be still in bondage to that which God has disowned? "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."